JESSE HELMS
NORTH CAROLINA

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 15, 1978

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ACTION is assigned to ARA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____

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LIAISON(S) _____

The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for the response to my letter of November 30, answered in your absence by Assistant Secretary Bennet.

I am encouraged by the State Department's response which makes clear that you do not consider the handling of the Jonestown case 'to be a precedent'.

I suggest, Mr. Secretary, that not only should Jonestown not be considered a precedent; I believe that definitive guidelines should be established now for guidance in the future.

The far-reaching implications of actions by the President and the Cabinet in such matters, without proper guidelines, is a matter of concern to me, as well as to many of my colleagues with whom I have spoken--and obviously to the public.

I am aware, of course, of the political implications of this episode in that Mr. Jones was a supporter of various prominent public officials. I feel, nonetheless, that the American taxpayers should not have to bear the financial burden in this matter, regardless of the political associations of the leader of the cult.

Therefore, I urge you to take whatever action necessary to attach the assets of the so-called Peoples' Temple, so that the American taxpayer will not have to bear the unwarranted burden involved.

(2)

Jesse Helms

I will appreciate your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Jesse Helms

JESSE HELMS:pd